

Maryland Laws for Bicyclists

- Maryland law provides for the right-of-way of bicyclists, just as it does for the operators of motor vehicles. Bicyclists also have the duty to obey all traffic signals, signs and pavement markings, just as do drivers.

Riding in Traffic Lanes and on Shoulders

- A bicyclist riding slower than the speed of traffic is confined to the right hand through lane (much the same way as a slow moving vehicle is) and as close to the right side of the road as is safe. A bicyclist can move further left to:
 - Make or attempt to make a vehicular style left turn;
 - Pass a stopped or slower moving vehicle; or
 - Avoid pedestrians or road hazards.
 - This ride-to-the-right provision does not apply when operating in a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle to travel safely side-by-side with another vehicle within the lane. The provision also does not apply where the right-hand lane is a turn lane, or the bicyclist is operating on a one-way street. (TR § 21-1205(a))
 - A bicyclist riding at the speed of traffic can operate in any lane, just as any other vehicle can. Where there is not a bike lane, a bicyclist may also use the shoulder of the roadway. (TR § 21-1205.1(b))
 - Bicycles may not be ridden in the travel lanes of any roadway where the posted maximum speed limit is more than 50 miles an hour; however, bicycles may be operated on the shoulder of these roadways.
 - Bicycles may not be operated on expressways (access-controlled freeways and interstate highways), except on an adjacent path or facility approved by the State Highway Administration. (TR § 21-1205.1(a)(2))

Riding in Bike Lanes

- Where there are marked bicycle lanes paved to a smooth surface, a person operating a bicycle must use the bike lane and may not ride on the roadway, except in the following situations:
 - When overtaking and passing another bicycle, motor scooter, pedestrian, or other vehicle within the bike lane if the overtaking and passing cannot be done safely within the bike lane;
 - When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into an alley, private road, or driveway;
 - When reasonably necessary to leave the bike lane to avoid debris or other hazardous condition; or
 - When reasonably necessary to leave the bike lane because the bike lane is overlaid with a right turn lane, merge lane, or other marking that breaks the continuity of the bike lane. (TR § 21-

1205.1(b)(2))

Equipment Required for Bicyclists

- By law, all bicycles must be equipped with brakes capable of stopping from a speed of 10 miles per hour within 15 feet on dry, level, clean pavement. (TR § 21-1207)(d)
- If operated in low visibility conditions, bicycles must also be equipped with a white beam headlight visible at a distance of 500 feet, and a red rear reflector visible at a distance of 600 feet if night time or during unfavorable visibility conditions. Alternately, a bicyclist may be equipped with a functioning lamp that acts as a reflector and emits a red light or a flashing amber light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear instead of, or in addition to the red reflector above. (TR § 21-1207)(a)
- A bicycle or motor scooter may be equipped with a bell or other audible device, but not a siren or whistle. (TR § 21-1207)(b)
- Any rider under the age of 16 must also wear a helmet that meets or exceeds the standards of the American National Standards Institute, the Snell Memorial Foundation, or the American Society for Testing and Materials. (TR § 21-1207.1)